IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-16 (Canceled)

Claim 17 (New): A repeater device arranged in a network, comprising:

a signature storage unit that stores a plurality of signatures;

a priority order allocating unit that allocates priority orders of the signatures in the

signature storage unit; and

a packet controlling unit that selects a signature allocated with a highest priority order

from the signatures in the signature storage unit and controls passage of packets in the

network based on the selected signature.

Claim 18 (New): The repeater device according to claim 17, wherein the signatures

include at least one generated signature and at least one set signature, and the repeater device

further comprising:

a signature generating unit that generates the generated signature based on

predetermined conditions; and

a signature receiving unit that receives input of the set signature, and

the signature storage unit stores the generated signature and the set signature, and

the priority order allocating unit allocates a higher priority order to the set signature

than the generated signatures.

Claim 19 (New): The repeater device according to claim 17, wherein each of the

signatures restricts passage of packets within a predetermined range, and

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the priority order allocating unit allocates a higher priority order to a signature with a narrower range.

Claim 20 (New): The repeater device according to claim 17, further comprising a suspicious signature generating unit that detects a suspicious attacking packet based on predetermined suspicious attack detection conditions, generates a suspicious signature for restricting the suspicious attacking packet, and stores the suspicious signature in the signature storage unit, wherein

the priority order allocating unit allocates priority orders to the suspicious signature along with other signatures in the signature storage unit.

Claim 21 (New): The repeater device according to claim 17, further comprising a legitimate signature generating unit that generates legitimate signatures for enabling valid packets based on predetermined legitimacy conditions and stores the legitimate signature in the signature storage unit, wherein

the priority order allocating unit allocates priority orders to the legitimate signature along with other signatures in the signature storage unit.

Claim 22 (New): The repeater device according to claim 17, further comprising an illegitimate signature generating unit that detects an illegitimate packet based on predetermined illegitimate traffic detection conditions, generates an illegitimate signature for restricting the illegitimate packet, and stores the legitimate signature in the signature storage unit, wherein

the priority order allocating unit allocates priority orders to the illegitimate signature along with other signatures in the signature storage unit.

Claim 23 (New): The repeater device according to claim 17, further comprising a signature receiving unit that receives a suspicious signature for restricting suspicious attacking packets from other repeater devices, and stores the suspicious signature in the signature storage unit, wherein the priority order allocating unit allocates priority orders to the suspicious signature along with other signatures in the signature storage unit.

Claim 24 (New): The repeater device according to claim 17, further comprising a legitimate signature generating unit that generates a legitimate signature for enabling valid packets based on predetermined legitimacy conditions received from the other repeater devices and stores the legitimate signature in the signature storage unit, wherein

the priority order allocating unit allocates priority orders to the legitimate signature along with other signatures in the signature storage unit.

Claim 25 (New): The repeater device according to claim 17, further comprising a signature receiving unit configured to receive input of a set signature and to store the set signature in the signature storage unit, wherein

the priority order allocating unit allocates priority orders to the set signature along with other signatures in the signature storage unit.

Claim 26 (New): A network attack protection system for protecting a network from attack, comprising:

a signature storage unit that stores a plurality of signatures;

a priority order allocating unit that allocates priority orders of the signatures in the signature storage unit; and

a packet controlling unit that selects a signature allocated with a highest priority order from the signatures in the signature storage unit and controls passage of packets in the network based on the selected signature.

Claim 27 (New): A relaying method comprising:

allocating priority orders to a plurality of signatures stored in a signature storage unit;

selecting a signature allocated with a highest priority order from the signatures in the signature storage unit; and

controlling passage of packets in the network based on the signature selected at the selecting.

Claim 28 (New): The relaying method according to claim 27, wherein the signatures include at least one generated signature and at least one set signature, and relaying method further comprising:

generating the generated signature based on predetermined conditions and storing the generated signature in the signature storage unit; and

receiving input of the set signature from a manager of the network and storing the set signature in the signature storage unit, wherein

the allocating includes allocating a higher priority order to the set signature than the generated signatures.

Claim 29 (New): The relaying method according to claim 27, wherein each of the signatures restricts passage of packets within a predetermined range, and

the allocating includes allocating a higher priority orders to signatures with a narrower range.

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Claim 30 (New): A computer-readable recording medium that sores therein a computer program that causes a computer to execute:

allocating priority orders to a plurality of signatures stored in a signature storage unit;

selecting a signature allocated with a highest priority order from the signatures in the signature storage unit; and

controlling passage of packets in the network based on the signature selected at the selecting.

Claim 31 (New): The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 30, wherein the signatures include at least one generated signature and at least one set signature, and the computer program further causing the computer to execute:

generating the generated signature based on predetermined conditions and storing the generated signature in the signature storage unit; and

receiving input of the set signature from a manager of the network and storing the set signature in the signature storage unit, wherein

the allocating includes allocating a higher priority order to the set signature than the generated signatures.

Claim 32 (New): The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 30, wherein each of the signatures restricts passage of packets within a predetermined range, and

the allocating includes allocating a higher priority orders to signatures with a narrower range.

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